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to ask whether there is not a sense in which an infinite nature not only may, but must, seek satisfaction in natural desires, and whether sin or selfishness is not rather to be regarded as seeing things in wrong proportions and acting accordingly? Turning the question round, we might ask: Can there be a human "life spent in the satisfaction of merely natural propensities"?

The remaining lectures deal with doctrines (the Incarnation, Atonement, etc.), which belong more to theology proper than to Metaphysics or Ethics; but it is hardly necessary to say that the strong ethical interest of the book is maintained throughout and that the subjects are discussed with the calm, massive reasonableness and high spiritual feeling which we find in all Principal Caird's work. Considering the book as a whole, I think it may safely be said that nothing wiser, more fair and more sympathetic has been written regarding the "fundamental ideas of Christianity."

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TRAINING OF THE YOUNG IN THE LAWS OF SEX. By Rev. the Hon. E. Lyttelton. Longmans, Green & Co., 1900. Pp. ix., 117.

This little book is an earnest, honest, attempt to answer two questions: (1) "Since our children are exposed to the risk of gathering vicious ideas about life and birth, ought we not ourselves to forestall the danger by giving wholesome teaching?" and, (2) "If so, how is this to be done?" To the first of these questions the first, and larger, half of the book is devoted; the second question occupying the remainder. The writer tries to show that curiosity in regard to the mystery of birth and life, is natural, unavoidable, and, to begin with, innocent; that owing, not to supposed evil influences at school, but to neglect to satisfy this real need at home, such curiosity is at the mercy of evil-minded companions; that consequently from the beginning, a "subject which in itself is full of nobleness, purity and health," becomes indelibly associated with dissimulation, impurity and vice, to the direct injury of the innocent mind and to the destruction of that natural confidence between child and parent which, until these questions obtruded themselves, had been perfect; that the only effectual antidote to these evils is "healthy ideas previously implanted and based upon instincts of reverence and home affection"; and finally that "the resulting mischief (from neglect

of this antidote) is enormously more prevalent than is commonly supposed."

In answer to the second question the author holds that the education should begin between the ages of eight and eleven, and be given by the mother. The facts of maternity should come first, then those of paternity. Later, towards puberty, the father should inspire a true conception of manhood, its responsibilities and the sacred dignity of human life. Of these two stages in the instruction a careful scheme is drawn up in detail.

Whatever the verdict which the individual reader may pass upon the success of the attempt here made to deal with a subject so difficult to handle, there can be no question that the treatment throughout is worthy of the highest praise. It is truthful, delicate and stimulating to a degree. No one, again, can dispute that the danger is a real one, that the risk of ignoring it altogether in the home is one to be avoided, if possible, and that the shyness and reserve which prevent so many parents from speaking to their children on this subject is a barrier most difficult to break down. But controversy will necessarily arise over the author's solution of the second question—how such teaching is to be given? The practical difficulties are not only very great, but vary indefinitely. It may be that no two households could, in detail, adopt any one plan. Nor does the author intend this. His suggestions are put forward, apparently, to illustrate the kind of instruction he thinks desirable, but to leave the actual method of teaching for individual taste, based upon sympathetic insight, to decide. On the other hand, it is just in concrete practical detail that the difficulties consist, that guidance is most needed. For example, according to the author, instruction should begin at the age of eight to eleven, when the child is beginning to be dissatisfied with the fairy tales, etc., with which his curiosity about the arrival of his youngest brother or sister has been hitherto put off. Now if the only persons to be considered were (say) two children of the age suggested and their mother, no harm, and a great deal of good, might result. But there are also nursemaids, governess, older brothers and sisters, perhaps visitors. The two children in question would certainly talk, simply and freely, in the presence of these others. Apart altogether from any social awkwardness thus arising would not the giggles of the nursemaid, or the "Hush!" of the governess, etc., etc., quickly teach the children that in some strange way this subject is different from others?

Would they not stimulate a morbid curiosity to know more (but to conceal that they know it) than a wise and loving mother would impart? If everyone the children met were as pure and singleminded, as discreet and refined, as the mother, the problem would be comparatively simple, but the facts of life are far otherwise.

The subject is a thorny one and beset with small practical difficulties, multifarious in variety. That many of these are left untouched, a few possibly increased, by the suggestions of this little book is to be expected. On the other hand much may be learnt from it, both directly and indirectly. It is a book which no parent or schoolmaster can fail to be helped by, and to the author of which many parents will feel a debt of genuine gratitude.

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**THE MAKING OF CHARACTER:** Some Educational Aspects of Ethics. By John MacCunn (Professor of Philosophy in University College, Liverpool), in The Cambridge Series for Schools and Training Colleges (Cambridge University Press).

A book of this kind, produced in a Series intended, as the publisher would say, to supply a felt want, needs to be reviewed from two standpoints—as a contribution to instruction in Ethics, and as a contribution to the theory of Education. Now from the first standpoint there is indeed much to commend, much to be grateful for. Professor MacCunn is writing most immediately for normal students, who have no time for the serious pursuit of philosophy, but who crave for some enlargement of mind. These young people often have great ability and they can find a few odd moments for thought in spite of the weary treadmill of Whitehall requirements. Nothing can be better for them than a popular introduction to Ethics, written from the standpoint of a man who recognizes the gravity of the teacher's task. Such a chapter as that upon "Habit and its Limitations," or a later one on "Sound Moral Judgment" will achieve their aim in making the young teacher understand what is meant by Ethics. But from the second standpoint, the standpoint, shall we say, of a teacher face to face with the problems of school life, the book is disappointing. It would not be fair to say that Mr. MacCunn avoids and ignores the more difficult issues involved in these problems at the pres-